

MINUTES

**MONTANA SENATE
58th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS AND LABOR

Call to Order: By **VICE CHAIRMAN MIKE SPRAGUE**, on February 19, 2003 at 9:08 A.M., in Room 422 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Dale Mahlum, Chairman (R)
Sen. Mike Sprague, Vice Chairman (R)
Sen. Sherm Anderson (R)
Sen. Vicki Cocchiarella (D)
Sen. Kelly Gebhardt (R)
Sen. Ken (Kim) Hansen (D)
Sen. Glenn Roush (D)
Sen. Don Ryan (D)
Sen. Carolyn Squires (D)

Members Excused: Sen. Bob Keenan (R)
Sen. Sam Kitzenberg (R)
Sen. Fred Thomas (R)

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Sherrie Handel, Committee Secretary
Eddy McClure, Legislative Branch

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted: SB 377, 2/11/2003
Executive Action: SB 377; SB 268; SB 331; SB 337; SB 304; SB 342

{Tape: 1; Side: A}

HEARING ON SB 377

Sponsor: SENATOR DALE MAHLUM, SD 35, MISSOULA

Proponents: Jim Jacobsen, Veteran; Bob Pavlovich, citizen

Opponents: None

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

SENATOR DALE MAHLUM, SD 35, MISSOULA, related that he brought this bill due to several requests from his constituents. He shared the letter he received from an 82 year old widow whose husband had been 100 percent disabled before he passed away. After his death, she received only \$600 per month to pay all of her expenses and taxes on the modest little home in which she lives. After he passed away, she lost his license exemption for disability and had to pay \$380 for her car license. SEN. MAHLUM got to thinking about it and that it ungracious of Montana that she lived with him for 55 years and all of a sudden he dies and she's expected to pay a lot more money for something he had received for so many years.

Proponents' Testimony:

Jim Jacobsen, Veteran, stood in favor of the bill for himself and four of his fellow veterans. He stated the state of Montana has a sizeable number of veterans living here. He pointed out that years ago, when they were called to duty, their spouses remained at home to take care of things by herself. Disabled veterans returned home, and the spouse had the extra burden of taking care of him. Montana statute provides property tax relief for 100 percent disabled veterans. When they pass away, that property tax exemption passes on to the surviving spouse, provided they do not marry. He asked the committee to sponsor this bill.

Bob Pavlovich, citizen, shared his full support of the bill and asked for a DO PASS from the committee.

Opponents' Testimony:

None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

SEN. GEBHARDT wanted to know if this bill provided only for a disabled veteran's surviving spouse who is also disabled. VICE CHAIRMAN MIKE SPRAGUE advised SEN. GEBHARDT to look at page five

of the bill which said it covers the spouse of a veteran disabled 100 percent who has not remarried.

VICE CHAIRMAN SPRAGUE asked **SENATOR MAHLUM** if he had considered less than 100 percent disabilities due to the fact that 100 percent disability is pretty hard to get. The sponsor did not and referred the question to **Mr. Jacobsen**, who stated it was only for those disabled 100 percent. Also, this bill would not apply to those with Purple Hearts unless they were 100 percent disabled. **Mr. Pavlovich** agreed.

Closing by Sponsor:

SEN. MAHLUM thanked the members of the committee for the good hearing.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 377

Motion/Vote: **SEN. COCCHIARELLA** moved that SB 377 DO PASS. Motion carried 9-0.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 268

Motion: **SEN. HANSEN** moved that SB 268 AS AMENDED, **EXHIBIT**(bus37a01) (SB026803.aem) BE POSTPONED UNTIL FEBRUARY 28, 2003. **Vote:** Motion carried 9-0.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 331

Motion/Vote: **SEN. SQUIRES** moved that SB 331 DO PASS AS AMENDED, **EXHIBIT**(bus37a02) (SB033101.aem). Motion carried 9-0.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 337

Discussion: After discussing an amendment brought forth by **SEN. COCCHIARELLA**, **EXHIBIT**(bus37a03), AND **SEN. ROUSH**, **EXHIBIT**(bus37a04), IT WAS DECIDED TO COMBINE THE TWO AMENDMENTS INTO ONE.

{Tape: 1; Side: B}

Motion/Vote: SEN. SPRAGUE moved that SB 337 DO PASS AS AMENDED, **EXHIBIT**(bus37a05) (SB033703.aem). Vote: Motion carried 9-0.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 304

Motion/Vote: SEN. COCCHIARELLA moved that SB 304 DO PASS AS AMENDED, **EXHIBIT**(bus37a06) (SB030401.aem). Motion carried 9-0.

{Tape: 2; Side: A}

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 342

Motion/Vote: SEN. GEBHARDT moved that SB 342 BE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. Motion carried 7-5 with COCCHIARELLA, HANSEN, ROUSH, RYAN AND SQUIRES voting no.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 10:37 A.M.

SEN. DALE MAHLUM, Chairman

SHERRIE HANDEL, Secretary

DM/SH

EXHIBIT (bus37aad)